

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-19 are pending. Claims 1-5 and 9-15 stand rejected and claims 6-8 and 16-19 are withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. In this response, applicants have amended claims 1-2, 6, 9-10 and 15.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-2 were rejected for containing informalities. Applicants have appropriately amended claims 1 and 2 and respectfully request, therefore, that the objection to claims 1-2 be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Office Action sets forth at page 3, paragraphs 6-7 that "claims 9-10 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph" Applicants have appropriately amended the claims and respectfully request, therefore, that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action sets forth at page 4, paragraph 9 "Claims 1-2, 10, and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Wilske. Wilske shows a spoke having all of the structure as set forth in the above claims." Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants' invention as recited in claim 1 includes features not disclosed nor suggested by Wilske, namely:

...a shaft having opposed longitudinal ends...

...the shaft having respective internally threaded portions at each end of the shaft and a terminal element having an externally threaded portion for coupling to one of the internally threaded portions of the shaft. (Emphasis added)

These features are described in applicants' specification, for example, at page 4, line 31 - page 5, line 24.

Wilske is relied upon as disclosing "all of the structure" of applicants' claimed invention. Wilske fails to disclose or suggest, however, "the shaft having respective internally threaded portions at each end of the shaft and a terminal element having an

externally threaded portion for coupling to one of the internally threaded portions of the shaft."

Applicants' claimed invention has the advantage that a symmetric spoke is obtained which is easier to produce than those of the prior art. In addition, the claimed structure allows the spoke to be positioned in either direction in assembly.

Applicants respectfully request, therefore, that because Wilske fails to disclose each and every feature of applicants' claimed invention, that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn and the claim allowed.

Claims 2, 4, 9-10 and 12-14 ultimately depend upon claim 1 and, thus, are likewise not subject to rejection for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action sets forth at page 5, paragraph 12 "Claims 3, 5, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilske...and further in view of Imao et al." Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims for the reasons set forth below.

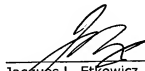
Imao is relied upon as "[teaching] the use of a spoke having terminal elements (1-2) formed from steel, while the shaft 3 is formed from a fiber reinforced material." Imao fails to make up for the deficiencies, however, with respect to Wilske discussed above with respect to claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that because claims 3, 5 and 15 ultimately depend upon claim 1, they are likewise not subject to rejection for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 20 is added. Basis for claim 20 may be found throughout applicants' specification as originally filed. This claim does not add new matter. Claim 20 includes additional patentable features over the cited prior art, namely that the shaft has a constant external diameter from a first end of the shaft to a second end of the shaft. The prior art relied upon in the Office Action fails to disclose this feature as well. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that claim 20 is allowable either because of this additional feature or because of its dependency on allowable claim 1.

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, applicants submit that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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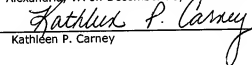
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The Director is hereby authorized to charge or credit Deposit Account No. **18-0350** for any additional fees, or any underpayment or credit for overpayment in connection herewith.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being electronically transmitted to: Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, VA on December 23, 2008.


Kathleen P. Carney